

**LODI CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL JOINT CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WITH THE LODI PLANNING COMMISSION
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2006**

A. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The Special Joint City Council meeting with the Lodi Planning Commission of September 14, 2006, was called to order by Mayor Hitchcock at 7:01 p.m.

Present: Council Members – Beckman, Hansen, Johnson, Mounce, and Mayor Hitchcock

Absent: Council Members – None

Present: Planning Commissioners – Cummins, Heinitz, Kiser, Mattheis, Moran, White, and
Chairperson Kuehne

Absent: Planning Commissioners – None

Also Present: City Manager King, City Attorney Schwabauer, and Interim City Clerk Perrin

B. REGULAR CALENDAR

- B-1 “Review and provide direction on the overall organization of the General Plan update, determine the method of soliciting public participation, identify key stakeholders, and clarify priorities for the General Plan update”

Community Development Director Hatch reported that the purpose of this meeting was to have basic introductions and discuss the overview, scope, and schedule. Mr. Hatch introduced the following representatives who are part of the General Plan project: Rajeev Bhatia, Yvonne Hung, and Sarah Nurmela with Dyett & Bhatia; Suzanne Lampert with Mundie & Associates; Julie Morgan and Mike Wallace with Fehr & Peers; and Jessica Mitchell and Ray Weiss with ESA (not in attendance were Michael Southworth with UC Berkeley and Doug Moore with West Yost and Associates).

Mr. Bhatia stated that staff is seeking direction from Council Members and Planning Commissioners on three main issues: the public participation program, list of stakeholders to interview in the initial process, and specific issues to include on the community outreach survey. In addition, each will have an opportunity to provide his or her visions and priorities for the City's General Plan. A General Plan outlines a vision for the long-range, physical development of a city and provides for specific implementing actions that allow it to be accomplished. It will establish a basis for determining whether future projects are in harmony with the City's vision and policies and will provide a guide to developers and agencies to design projects that enhance and preserve community character and resources. The General Plan must be internally consistent and any conflicts with policies, diagrams, maps, and standards must be reconciled. State law also states that subsequent city actions, whether it is zoning, capital improvements programs, location of parks, streetscape improvements, bicycles paths, etc., are consistent with the General Plan, and it requires that certain elements, such as land use, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and housing, be included. The City has further decided that certain other elements be addressed, which include growth management, community design, and livability. There is some flexibility on what the elements are and how they are itemized. He assured that his firm would make certain this plan belongs to Lodi, enhances its characteristics, and responds directly to the issues that face Lodi—livability, sustainability, urban design, community design, neighborhood design, growth management, and open space preservation. This will be a participatory process that will engage the Council, Planning Commission, and the community at large.

This is a four-phase work program, which will span approximately two years with ten total tasks. The public participation program will include decision maker meetings, meetings with stakeholders, citywide survey, livability survey, community workshops, neighborhood workshops, newsletters, and information on the website. The mail-in survey will be mailed to one in three households and will have both open-ended questions as well as more

quantitative numerical rating questions in order to prioritize issues. Reports from the surveys will be published immediately, and documentation will be provided at the conclusion of the workshops. The first substantive task after the initial outreach will relate to defining a planning area, which would include the City limits, all of the land within the sphere of influence, and any other land that bears relationship to the planning. Then there will be a comprehensive assessment of land use, urban design, transportation, and infrastructure that will be included in a working paper. There will be another specific paper on overall growth prospects and economic strategies, which will encompass dimensions of tourism, downtown development, retail, and a specific paper dealing with the City's long-term economic strategy. An additional working paper will be prepared regarding issues of neighborhood design, urban design, City design, and livability. There will be sketch plans that will be citywide land use plans, visualization of urban design strategies, and an assessment of the transportation impact, infrastructure impacts, and fiscal impacts. The consultants will assemble a fiscal model of the City that can be used later for other purposes. Next, the consultants will work with the City and the community to come to a preferred land use plan, which will serve as the basis for writing the various elements in the General Plan. The draft Environmental Impact Report and General Plan will be on a parallel track so that the General Plan is a self mitigating document. This will lead to a public review process, followed by hearings, and ultimately approval.

In response to Mayor Hitchcock, Mr. Bhatia stated that there would be approximately 20 stakeholder meetings, which would be flexible and involve groups of two to three. The meetings would last 30 to 45 minutes and would be a candid one-on-one dialog regarding the issues. There may be more than 20 individuals; however, he anticipated there would be only 20 sessions. Once the meetings have been held, Council will be provided with a list of those involved, as well as a report on the findings.

Commissioner Heinitz expressed hope that east side residents would be included in the community workshops and presentations.

In response to Mayor Hitchcock, Mr. Bhatia responded that the 13 to 14 decision maker meetings would be Council meetings, Planning Commission meetings, or joint meetings spaced out over the next two years. There would also be three citywide workshops, with an open house at the end, and 20 stakeholder meetings right at the outset. There will be some neighborhood forums, including one on livability. Staff will be provided with a PowerPoint presentation that it can use to present to various groups. Mayor Hitchcock expressed concern that this may not be a sufficient outreach program.

Commissioner Heinitz stated that he recently attended the League of California Cities conference, at which a speaker emphasized the importance of holding citywide workshops at various locations within the community; not only at city hall. He suggested workshops be held at the LOEL Senior Center, various schools, and locations on the east side and that they be advertised by mailed flyers and advertisements in the newspapers, to which Mayor Hitchcock concurred.

Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson agreed; however, he expressed concern that the level of participation may still be low. He suggested that the survey include a question as to whether or not residents were willing to pay for the elements in order to determine the level of commitment.

Chair Kuehne questioned if the survey would be available on the website, to which Mr. Bhatia responded that, based on his experience, responses to web-based surveys are exceedingly poor and he believed it would not be as effective as the mail-in survey.

Commissioner Moran questioned the timeline and whether the holidays would have an affect on the schedule, to which Mr. Bhatia stated that the schedule was pushed out due to calendaring issues and he believed some of those dates would need to be adjusted.

Council Member Hansen believed that the value of the General Plan is going to be a direct reflection on how much input is received. In regard to the two-year time frame, he hoped that progress stays on task due to the fact that there could be new Council Members in 2008. He stressed the importance of completing the entire process with the Council Members who are seated following this election in order to keep the consistency. Mr. Bhatia agreed and emphasized that everyone needs to make these tasks a priority.

Council Member Beckman suggested that the mail-in survey be sent to every resident as part of the City's utility bill mailing. He believed the budget could handle the extra mailings, to which Mr. Bhatia stated that the extra cost would be in the compilation of the results, particularly with the open-ended questions. Mr. Beckman further suggested that any question on the survey that affects the City's general fund include a question on whether or not residents would be willing to pay a sales tax, parcel tax, or a user fee, to which Mayor Hitchcock stated that she could not support that suggestion.

Chair Kuehne requested that the question on the survey regarding bike paths be rephrased slightly to include bike, jogging, or walking paths that would be off of main thoroughfares. He further suggested that there be more connections through Lodi, similar to the wilderness area behind Lodi Lake.

Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson suggested that the survey use language such as "commitment" versus "pay for" and further suggested that both the City Council and Planning Commission meet as often as possible in order to be kept apprised of the discussions and avoid problems arising during a crucial point in the process.

Commissioner Heinitz suggested the survey be used to prioritize the wish list items in order to determine what is most important.

Commissioner Cummins made a suggestion that telemarketers and door-to-door surveyors be hired to collect the survey data, which he believed would reach 80% of the constituents. Mr. Bhatia explained that the mail-in survey results would be compiled by a firm that performs this kind of work. He stated that a phone and door-to-door survey would cost much more than what is outlined in this program. He also believed there were many other ways to participate, including public meetings, forums, and newsletters.

In response to Mayor Hitchcock, Mr. Bhatia stated that there is some flexibility in the schedule and that every effort would be made to not compress everything before the holidays.

The following issues were suggested to be included in the survey:

- Mayor Hitchcock – community separator/greenbelt, urban growth boundary, small neighborhood parks, Lodi as a tourism destination, and what size (population) should Lodi be;
- Commissioner Mattheis – stressed that the community be listened to before any ideas and plans are formulated;
- Council Member Mounce – historical preservation and feasibility of additional hotels and bed and breakfasts;
- Vice Chair Moran – traffic mitigation; and
- Commissioner Heinitz – introduction of local wineries into the community and its use of Lodi services, as well as developing tasting rooms downtown.

The following suggestions were made on potential stakeholders:

- Council Member Mounce – Lodi Improvement Committee and Historical Society;

- Council Member Hansen – Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin and Lodi Unified School District;
- Council Member Beckman – Chamber of Commerce, LOEL Senior Center, Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau, Downtown Lodi Business Partnership, San Joaquin Partnership, representatives from the development community, and El Concilio;
- Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson – key industrial people in the community;
- Mayor Hitchcock – representatives of the six large industrial electric customers, as well as the hospital and medical community; and
- Chair Kuehne – Bay Area Rapid Transit.

Community Development Director Hatch requested direction on whether or not Council would like to conduct joint meetings with the Planning Commission on all or some of the key meetings or whether to select a steering committee. A majority of the Council expressed consensus in conducting them all as joint meetings; however, Council Member Hansen added the stipulation that if a Council Member or a Commissioner cannot make the meeting, it still proceed in order to stay on track. Chair Kuehne expressed support for having as many of the Council Members participate in the process because it becomes redundant on staff and consultants to have to repeat information.

City Manager King stated that it is the expectation of Council and the Planning Commission that, for the contract amount of \$920,000, the consultant be able to accommodate requests for additional public meetings, without the need for added compensation, and he hoped the project would remain within budget. Mr. Bhatia could not guarantee there would not be additional costs; however, he stated he would provide Council with detailed information or a contract change order, if necessary. Mr. King also expressed concern that the project has been delayed from the original proposal and he hoped the consultants will work around this, rather than pushing the schedule back.

Mayor Hitchcock questioned whether the City would get a better statistical survey with a full mail-in survey or could it be accomplished with less, to which Mr. Bhatia responded that, if it were mailed to one in three households, an 8% response would be a very good sampling and he further pointed out that the results would not differ much if more were received.

Council Member Hansen appreciated the City Manager's comments on costs as the City does have a fiduciary responsibility to keep the costs within reason. He expressed concern about the added expense to compile the survey results if they were mailed to all residents in the utility bills and felt confident that the one in three household mailing would produce a sufficient sampling.

Council Member Beckman suggested that an evaluation be made on what is more important—the added cost to compile the additional surveys or the additional public meetings—and that the information be provided before a decision is made. Mr. Bhatia stated that he would provide a line-item list of the costs.

Commissioner Heinitz suggested that, to cut down on the cost of the public meetings, the Council or Commission participate in and report back on the meetings. Mr. Bhatia stated that his firm could accommodate that and help organize the forums so there is an overall structure in the way information is presented and recorded to keep it consistent across the board. Mayor Hitchcock suggested that staff may be able to run those meetings.

Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson disagreed with the suggestion, stating that the City is paying close to \$1 million for this service and the consultants are experts on how to successfully run a meeting and solicit responses. He encouraged Council Members and Commissioners to attend; however, he suggested they only listen and not participate. Mr. Bhatia stated he would work with staff on the appropriate way to respond to this direction on outreach and return with an appropriate recommendation.

Commissioner Kiser questioned if the mail-in survey could be mailed to registered voters, as they are more inclined to participate, to which Mr. Bhatia stated that the survey could be mailed to all addresses or all registered voter; however, if too few are received, additional surveys can be mailed.

Chair Kuehne agreed with mailing them to all residents in the utility bill if it does not escalate the cost significantly, which would also catch many of the registered voters.

In response to Council Member Hansen, Mr. Hatch stated that the budget included a separate mailing due to automatic payments and the fact that many renters do not receive utility bills. Council Member Hansen opted for a separate mailing, as budgeted.

Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson pointed out that the utility bills are also on a cycle, which may result in a time constraint in sending out the surveys.

Question #1: What do you think are Lodi's major strengths?

- Commissioner White – Improvement in and emphasis on the downtown area; tourism will increase because of the downtown and wine industry.
- Commissioner Mattheis – Preserving the old infrastructure within downtown and the neighborhoods surrounding it and allowing infill development.
- Commissioner Kiser – The wine industry should be a focus, as well as bringing in tourism and improving downtown.
- Commissioner Heinitz – Development of Hutchins Street Square, which has a performing arts theater and a senior center and promotes tourism.
- Commissioner Cummins – The faith-based communities and organizations that provide a social service that the City is unable to provide and the newer developments along Lower Sacramento Road and Kettleman Lane.
- Vice Chair Moran – Lodi has a strong sense of ownership in the community and she would like to see future generations also have that ownership.
- Chair Kuehne – He believed Lodi was still a safe, clean community to raise a family.
- Mayor Hitchcock – Even though the population is 63,000, Lodi has a small-town character and sense of a safe community; Lodi's strength of ownership and its volunteerism.
- Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson – Lodi still cares as a community.
- Council Member Mounce – Lodi's sense of community and sense of ownership; Lodi has the greatest people in the State of California and its major strength is the budding wine industry and that it could be the next destination.
- Council Member Hansen – Lodi's strong sense of community and the fact that it is a responsive community; Lodi is an island (i.e. it is not surrounded by other communities) and has its own identity; the services this community provides is appreciated and it is still a safe, clean community.
- Council Member Beckman – Pride in the community, the downtown, agri-tourism, Lodi Lake, and Hutchins Street Square.

Question #2: What are Lodi's challenges and opportunities?

- Council Member Beckman – The challenges are improving the local economy and using land use as a tool to accomplish that and accomplishing a greenbelt while keeping local economy alive through the process.
- Council Member Hansen – Lodi has moved in the direction of attracting jobs, and the challenge is that businesses want to locate in Lodi but have no place to go. Lodi has had to deal with shortages in funds and the financial challenges arising from that will be major over the next 20 years. He pointed to the economic viability of a city, being able to keep what it has, and expanding the level of services to what people want. Another challenge will be to protect Lodi as an island and its boundaries.

- Council Member Mounce – The challenges and opportunities are to maintain the downtown, revitalizing the east side, identifying new areas for commercial and industrial growth to create Lodi as a viable place for jobs and industrial companies, defining tourism and appropriate locations for wineries and bed and breakfasts, and how that associates with a community separator in making it viable so that farmers and winegrape growers can work together to create a great sense of community.
- Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson – He believed the outskirts of Lodi would take care of itself, yet he advocated throwing the widest loop possible around Lodi. The challenges and opportunities are in the older sections of town and how to restructure, rebuild, and revitalize something that has been neglected and depreciated for many years. He believed Lodi was on the cusp of a transformation due to growth and Lodi will need an economic engine to keep up with the growth and pay for the increase in services. He was in favor of finding ways to create space to generate jobs for people within the community and to help pay for cost of services in this community.
- Mayor Hitchcock – She believed the biggest challenge would be the pressure to grow from within and without. This would be an opportunity to make sure that Lodi throws the biggest loop around the community and that it look at urban growth boundaries and a community separator/greenbelt.
- Chair Kuehne – Lodi becoming a destination location, whether that includes wineries downtown or bed and breakfasts, and what that would look like; redevelopment of the east side and on Sacramento Street and Central Avenue; Lodi becoming more of a pedestrian friendly community and connecting the east to the west and to the downtown area. Lodi would need to make growth fit well in order to retain the sense of community, as well as having a community separator.
- Vice Chair Moran – Wine-related tourism, agricultural preservation, and economic development are all rolled into one as both a challenge and an opportunity in that they seem to be the best way to get a shot in the arm for fiscal requirements. The other area to consider is parks and bicycle/pedestrian circulation with linkages to parks and other areas; not just for vehicles. Bringing in the next generation and keeping it livable and lovable for the next generation. She believed people were priced out of the housing market and that there are no starter homes in Lodi. If Lodi wants to remain viable as a city, it needs to look at bringing in the youthful group. She suggested that the survey include a question on where people live and work, in order to figure out the economic balance of the community.
- Commissioner Cummins – Agreed with the statements regarding economic development and affordable housing. He stated that a challenge is also facing an anti-growth sentiment, which almost resulted in the City losing Blue Shield's 600 to 1,000 jobs. He believed car dealers were a real asset to the community since they contribute considerably to the tax base in Lodi.
- Commissioner Heinitz – He believed a challenge is the blend between the wine industry and growth in the City. Without growth, the City will stagnate; however, every loss of vineyards moves the City further away from becoming a destination. The City needs to look at density, zoning, and the need for affordable housing. Other communities have developed within their sphere without growing outside the boundaries and have gone to three and four-story apartment buildings or condominiums.
- Commissioner Kiser – He believed a challenge was to bring growth in at a minimal amount in order to provide jobs for the community, affordable housing, and essential services. He hoped to strike a balance with the farmers so the City can continue to grow and farmers can still make a living.
- Commissioner Mattheis – He quoted data that the Central Valley, from Fresno to Sacramento, currently has a population of 3.5 million people and that in the year 2040 it will grow to 7.5 million. One of the challenges for Lodi is to not become a part of that urban sprawl. The City will need to reeducate itself and the development community on the principles of new urbanism that can look at a more integrated mixed use; not just

adjacent land uses. That is a challenge in terms of the new outlying areas and how that integrates with the greenbelt. He hoped Lodi could look at ways to offer incentives to restructure the older portions of town, to achieve the same type of livability and mixed use.

- Commissioner White – He believed affordable housing was the number one challenge and he believed it would be accomplished through multi-family structures. Infill to the City is also a major challenge.

Question #3: Describe your vision; what would Lodi look like 20 to 25 years from now?

- Commissioner White – He envisioned Lodi remaining small and being a special place in the Central Valley, with a downtown that had entertainment and a nightlife.
- Commissioner Mattheis – His vision is for a connected, livable, walkable community that still has a small-town feel, yet has matured into the 21st century.
- Commissioner Kiser – He would like to see Lodi maintain its old world charm.
- Commissioner Heinritz – Whether Lodi grows, develops, or changes, he would like Lodians to take pride in this community. He does not envision Lodi being developed out to Interstate 5 and being completely “built out.”
- Commissioner Cummins – In the year 2025, he envisioned Lodi to be a town of 90,000 people that will have many of the retail establishments it does not currently have, which would enable sales tax dollars to remain in this community.
- Vice Chair Moran – She would like to see smart growth occur over the next 20 years so that people want to settle in this community.
- Chair Kuehne – He would like to see light rail come into the City and that Lodi become a destination location.
- Mayor Hitchcock – She does not wish Lodi to look like Elk Grove with strip malls and sprawled housing. Growth needs to be much more thought out and there needs to be a job-housing balance. She envisioned a small-town feel and a safe community. If Lodi grows too large, it will not have the police response times it currently has, and she believed the City needs to look at preservation of agricultural land.
- Mayor Pro Tempore Johnson – He believed that a population of 90,000 would no longer be considered a small town. As new urbanism and development come about, the biggest pressure will be on the City Council, Planning Commission, and Community Development staff to design the growth. If the City continues with the 2% growth limitation, it may be able to save the urban or agriculture environment; however, everything in the middle will be vastly different from what it is today. He believed that this was more of an on-going planning process and that the adoption of this General Plan and the design of this community will have to be wrestled with over the next 20 years.
- Council Member Mounce – She would like to see Lodi maintain its small square footage, that it be dense and compact, and that it grow up, not out. In 2025, she hoped Lodi would be one of the greatest destinations in the Central Valley, if not in the State of California.
- Council Member Hansen – He believed that in 2025 this community would have a high percentage of senior citizens and he hoped that the City would be responsive to this increased demand on services. In addition, there will be an increase in the younger generation, and he envisioned the community to have programs available to the youth of this community. In regard to growth and the potential for Lodi to reach 90,000 people, he believed that, if Lodi had a reasonable level of housing, the ability to shop within the community, and the ability to take care of the senior population and provide programs for youth, this community could still maintain its identity and small-town feel. He envisioned Lodi’s downtown to be a viable, fun place and hoped that more people would be living downtown.

- Council Member Beckman – He stated his vision is a balanced community with a mix of densities, proportionality, and a housing to jobs ratio. Lodi needs affordable housing and starter homes, as well as higher densities and multiple-level buildings to avoid sprawl. He would like to see Lodi grow an average of 1.5% a year, and his ultimate vision for Lodi in 2025 is that it be exactly as it is today, but a bit larger.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Deborah Kass stated that she preferred the survey be mailed to every citizen in Lodi.

C. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Perrin
Interim City Clerk